The Myrtle

"INSTEAD OF THE BRIER SHALL COME UP THE MYRTLE TREE." ISA. LV. 13

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Going to School.

I see the little children, creeping, creeping,
Down the long hillside to the village school,
With slow, reluctant feet, and almost weeping
To end glad summer with the sterner rule
Of tasks and hours, and waste October weather
Pent up in irksome study all together.

I see the little children, running, running,
When school is over, to resume their fun;
Or in the late, sweet warmth of daylight, sunning
Their little discontents away, each one.
"How nice to be grown up," so they are saying;
"And not to study, but be always playing."

Ah, foolish little children! if you knew it,
Grown folks must study, just as children do.
Must punctual be at school, or else they rue it,
And learn a harder lesson yet than you.
Early they set to work, and toil all day;
The school lets out too late for any play.

Their school-room is the world, and life the master;
A stern, harsh master he, and hard to please.
Some of the brighter children study faster
Than can the others who are dull; and these,
When they've recited, if they stand the test
The master suffers to go home and rest.

But all must learn a lesson soon or later,
And all must answer at the great review;
Until at length the last discouraged waiter
Has done his task, and read the lesson through;
And with his swollen eyes and weary head,
At last is told he may hie home to bed.

So, little children, when you feel like crying
That you are forced to learn to read and write,
Think of the many harder lessons lying
In the dim future which you deem so bright.
Grown folks must study, even against their will;
Be very glad that you are children still!

—*Susan Coolidge.*

Strong drink shall be bitter to them that drink it.

The Gold Necklace.

A BRIGHT lad was Johnny of about twelve or thirteen years. He lived among the green hills, where his father had a neat farm, and where the great world was little known.

A peddler who used to travel round selling pretty things to the country folks, took a liking to the little boy, and inspired him with a strong desire to try his hand in trade, which, he told him, was so much more profitable than farming. He wanted a boy to assist in carrying his merchandise; and Johnny thought that it was the beginning of great things, when he was invited to travel with the peddler in that capacity.

The farmer made no objection to the arrangement. He had a large family, and could spare his little son; and perhaps, too, he thought it wise to let the lad have a trial of the life which appeared so charming. He therefore gave him permission to go, but added, as he bade him farewell, "Be a good boy, Johnny; and if you get tired, come back home."

The mother added her cheerful good wishes; and after kissing each one of the family, the little boy started with light spirits by the peddler's side.

Johnny had quite a gay time assisting in the sales of ribbons and laces, rings and brooches; and the peddler's lively companionship shortened the road. At length they approached a large house surrounded by handsome grounds, where they were received by two or three richly-dressed ladies, and presented their gay wares.

Gold necklaces were then very fashionable, and one of pretty design was produced by the peddler, which he offered to the ladies at a great bargain,

It was the last of a lot, he said, each of which had fetched him a good price; he could therefore afford to sell this one without calculating profit, and especially as the ladies had bought several articles of him, he would let them have the necklace for two pounds, ten shillings, which he declared to be less than cost price. The ornament was purchased, the price paid, and the dealer gravely withdrew. At a little distance from the house, however, he burst into a loud laugh, and slapping his young companion on the back, exclaimed: "There, my boy, that's the way to do business! That necklace cost me about half-a crown, and there's not a bit of gold in it!"

Johnny stood still, staring with amazement at the announcement. At length he spoke: "Father told me if I got tired to come home, and I believe I am tired now. Good-by." And handing the pack which he carried, to its owner, he coldly turned away.

It was uow the peddler's turn to be astonished. The laugh was changed to an expression of concern, and, following the boy, he used every argument to induce him to proceed in his company; but Johnny had made up his mind. His sense of right had been thoroughly outraged, and no persuasion could keep him another hour in connection with a man who had thus shamelessly committed a wrong, and then boasted of his own dishonesty.

Johnny's parents were surpriesd to see him, when he appeared at home again so soon after his attempt to go into business, but they were well pleased when he explained the reason for his being there.

This decision of the boy was seed-corn for a future harvest of character. He had begun to call things by their own right name, and he has never forgotten this impulse toward the right.

From that honest boy has grown a person of great moral worth, and we all to-day admire the man, who when he was a boy would not go in partnership with a deceiver.

A LEADING minister of one of our largest cities was strongly advised by his physician to give up tobacco, as it was rapidly undermining his health; but he continued its use, and soon died. Delmonico was warned by one of the best physicians in New York that he must quit smoking or die. He did not quit, and he, too, soon died. Such cases should be a warning to our young men.

Honest Coasting.

"All right?" shouted the steersman of a double runner to the boy on guard at the foot of a steep hill.

"No, hold on," replied the guard in an honest voice, as he looked up and down the road which crossed the coasting track at right angles.

"Oh, start her along! He is fooling!" urged one of the passengers anxious to be flying down the steep hill.

"No, I won't," retorted the leader. "If Charlie Green says it isn't all right, it isn't. *He never lies.*"

At that instant, a heavily laden express team came lumbering across the track, its wheels making no noise in the soft snow and no bells announcing its coming. Had the sled started, it would have been a narrow escape, had there been no mishap to boys or horses.

A second more, and a hearty "all right" from the foot of the hill set the double-runner flying in safety and delight to its distant goal.

Each boy may draw his own moral.—*Sel.*

HERE are some wise rules for conduct, which have floated around among the newspapers. We do not know who wrote them, but they are worth remembering, and, more important still, they are worthy of practice:

"1. Keep a list of your friends, and let God be the first in the list, however long it may be.

"2. Keep a list of the gifts you get, and let Christ, who is the 'unspeakable gift,' be first.

3. "Keep a list of your mercies, and let pardon and life stand at the head.

"4. Keep a list of your joys, and let the 'joy unspeakable and full of glory' be first.

5, "Keep a list of your hopes, and let the hope of glory be foremost.

6. "Keep a list of your sorrows, and let sorrow for sin be first.

7. "Keep a list of your sins, and let the sin of unbelief be as the first and worst of all."

"MAMMA!" It was little Ray Brush calling; but his mamma couldn't answer right away; for she was trying to sew up a seam on the machine, and the baby was helping her. Presently she said, "Well, what is it, Ray?" "Oh, mamma! I saw two cows in Minnie Hayden's yard." "Indeed! And what did they do?" "Oh! one of them kind of smiled at me."

The Little Housekeeper.

Quite right, I have all kinds of tenants," said a kind-faced old gentleman," but the one I like the best is a child not more than ten years of age. A few years ago I got an opportunity to buy a piece of land over on the West Side, and I did so. I noticed that there was an old coop of a house on it, but paid no attention to it. After awhile a man came to me and wanted to know if I would rent it to him.

"'What do you want it for?' said I.

"'To live in,' he replied.

"'Well,' said I, 'You can have it. Pay me what you think it is worth to you.'

"The first month he brought me two dollars, and the second month a little boy who said he was the man's son came with three dollars. After that I saw the man once in awhile; but in the course of time the boy paid the rent regularly, sometimes two dollars and sometimes three dollars. One day I asked the boy what had become of his father,

"'He's dead, sir,' was the reply.

"'Is that so?" said I. 'How long since?

"'More'n a year,' he answered.

I took his money, but I made up my mind that I would go over and investigate; and the next day I drove over there. The old shed looked quite decent. I knocked at the door, and a little girl let me in. I asked for her mother. She said she didn't have any.

"'Where is she?' said I.

"'We don't know, sir. She went away after my father died, and we've never seen her since.

"Just then a little girl about three years old came in, and I learned that these three children had been keeping house together for a year and a half, the boy supporting his two little sisters by blacking boots and selling newspapers, and the elder girl managing the house and taking care of the baby. Well, I just had my daughter call on them; and we keep an eye on them now. I thought I wouldn't disturb them while they are getting along. The next time the boy came with the rent I talked with him a little, and then I said. 'My boy, keep right on as you have begun, and you will never be sorry. Keep your little sisters together, and never leave them. Now look at this.'

"I showed him a ledger in which I had entered up all the money that he had paid me for rent, and I told him it was all his with interest. 'You keep right on,' says I, 'and I'll be your banker; and when this amounts to a little more I will see that you get a house somewhere of your own."
—*S. S. Evangelist.*

Stories of the Beard.

It is interesting to read of the manners and customs of the people of other times. Probably our ways would be no less entertaining to another generation. Some quaint "customs of the beard" we have copied from a late paper. They are these:—

"To have a beard in the days of ancient civilization, was to give a man a title to some sort of respect. One of the Roman emperors once grew angry because a neighboring country sent to his court, as ambassador, a beardless youth. But the youth was witty as well as bold.

"'Sire,' he said, will I go back to my people, and let them send you a goat.'

"Real gold thread was used to tie up the whiskers of the kings of Persia.

"An English ambassador to the Russian court, George Chillingworth by name, had a goatee five feet and two inches long. History tells us that this goatee was of a beautiful yellow, and that the Czar, Ivan the Terrible, used to like to smooth it, just as he would the soft fur of a pet bear's back.

"It was at one time, not very long ago, thought to be a sin to shave. Many books were written about it, one of them being entitled, 'Shaving a Breach of the Sabbath, and a Hindrance of the Gospel.'

"In the time of Henry VIII., beards were taxed at so much for mustaches, so much for chin-whiskers, so much for goatees, and so much for the full beard."—*Sel.*

A LIFE for Christ must always be a life of love, of usefulness, and of helpfulness. It is just living for God, day by day, hour by hour. It is nothing strained and unnatural; beginning in the heart, in a true devotion to Christ, it is lived out in simple obedience and quiet faithfulness in whatever sphere our lot may be cast.

THE mind is like the body in its habits—exercise can strengthen, as indolence can weaken it; they are both improved by discipline, both ruined by neglect.

BE not satisfied with half-service. Be a soldier all over, and follow Christ's banner across the whole world of evil.

Safe Places.

How much better when the shadows
Of the night have gathered in
And the varied temptations
Which induce our youth to sin

Are abroad in all the highways,
That some quiet boys love home,
And resist the inclination
Which may come to them to roam.

They can find beside the hearthstone
Many harmless sports, and joys,
With their books, or with their music
With their games, or with their toys.

And they know that whatsoever
To their forming lives may come,
There is nothing that is safer
Than the atmosphere of home.

E. M. B.

"Our Ancestors."

Our ancestors were of the sort who were "early to bed and early to rise." In Anglo-Saxon times, even the king and his court rose at day-break, and he was regarded as lazy who was in bed after the cock had crowed. In an old manuscript a feudal lord exhorts his son to rise betimes; for, he says, "He who sleeps too long in the morning, becomes thin and lazy, and loses his day if he does not amend himself."

There have been all sorts of inventions for waking up sleepers in the morning. The alarm-clock is the most familiar to us, but sometimes the sleeper fails to heed the alarm. There was, a few years ago, on exhibition, a bed so arranged in connection with an alarm-clock, that at the appointed hour the alarm would strike, and if the sleeper did not immediately arise and adjust the affair, the bed would in five minutes, fall apart and let him down to the floor. We heard some one suggest that it might be well to put a tub of water under the bed and so souse the sleeper, but we do not think that was ever tried.

The latest invention of this sort is in Germany, where some one has devised a musical bed, so constructed that, by means of a concealed piece of mechanism, the pressure of the body produces the softest harmony, which lasts long enough to lull one to sleep. At the head of the bed is a dial with a hand, which can be placed at whatever hour the person wishes to awake, and, at the time fixed, the bed plays a march of Spontini, with drums and cymbals, loud enough to wake the loudest sleeper.

That, we all call artistic. Think of being lulled to slumber by softest music, and awakened in the morning by a noisy march! There is something peculiarly German in that notion, for the Germans are noted for their fondness for music.—*Sel.*

"MEN often jump at conclusions," says the proverb. So do dogs. We saw a dog jump at the conclusion of a cat, which was sticking through the opening of a partly closed door.

THE parks, commons, and open spaces, which are available for public recreation within the metropolis, and which form the lungs of London, are 42 in number, and contain about 4,490 acres, exclusive of the squares, or about 6 per cent. of the whole area of London.

Be True.

WHEN Mr. Frost died it was supposed by all his friends that he had left an ample fortune for the support of his wife and child.

They had always lived luxuriously, and when the estate was settled, it was very hard for the widow and her son to learn that there was very little left for their maintenance, not enough to give them shelter and nourishment.

Peter was a manly boy, and as soon as he understood the condition they were in, he told his mother that he would leave school, and get a situation in a store where he might hope to earn enough for his own, and her support.

It was very hard to Mrs. Frost to think of Peter being obliged to do this, as it would break up the whole plan that had been made for his education, and this she knew would cripple his usefulness in all the remainder of his earth life.

But there was no choice: mouths must be fed, and bodies clothed; and there was no way to do this without labor.

Therefore Peter made the change cheerfully, and began as provider for the little household.

The getting of a place was not an easy matter,

as he had supposed that it would be. He tried faithfully, for weeks, before he got anything that would pay for their daily bread. When this was secured he ran with great delight to his mother with the tidings.

She rejoiced with him, and the experiment began.

He was very faithful, and careful in all the details of the business, and his employers liked him very much.

Everything went well for some weeks, when one day Mrs. Frost returned in the middle of the afternoon from a call that she had been making, and, to her surprise found Peter at home.

In a few words he told her that he had lost his situation.

No words can describe her feelings as she looked into the future, and thought what was to become of herself and her child.

But Peter was unmoved. He knew that he had lost the situation through no fault of his own, and his faith taught him that the Lord would watch over him, and provide a way.

He explained to his mother that he had been discharged, because he was unwilling to tell a falsehood in some of the matters of trade, about which the other clerks did not scruple.

When she had heard the whole story, she said: "You were right my boy, and I would rather have a noble truthful son than any of the worldly comforts which your wages might have brought to us."

And so they faced the emergency that was before them with as cheerful hearts as they could muster, and, always since, in referring to the hour which followed, they have been proud in the thought, that they dared to do right, and did not flinch in time of trouble.

Relief from the difficulty came sooner than either of them expected.

Mr. Snell, the senior partner of the firm, had been away when Peter was dismissed, and on his return to the store an hour later, he found what had happened, and immediately set about rectifying the trouble.

He had liked Peter from the first, and was now very glad to take his part when others had accused him.

Whatever his own code of moral action may have been, he liked a boy who was willing to stand for his idea of right, and he at once sent for Peter, and reinstated him in his place at the store.

This was the beginning of success for Peter. He rose rapidly in position, and his wages were increased accordingly, and never have he or his mother had to regret the day when for truth's sake he ventured all.

E. M. B.

For the Myrtle.

Prairie Life.

No. IV.

OUR PLAYMATES.

Our playmates are animals; you see the children who live nearest us, are so far off, across the prairie, that they very seldom come to see us. So sister and I have to play with each other and our pets. Sister's name is Sadie and she is four years old. I am nine years old and I herd the cows, and I ride horseback a great deal, and I wear long-legged boots, because we have found that the rattlesnakes are very thick on the sandy knoll where our house stands; the strong boots are to make it safer for me to walk about.

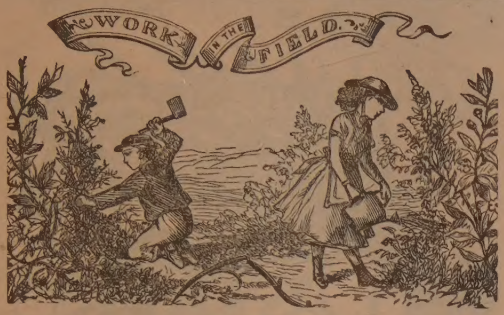
Mamma does not allow Sadie to step out of paths for fear she may step upon a snake in the grass and get a dreadful bite. But I was going to tell about our playmates. One day I was coming home from the herd of cows and I passed a sheep ranche where there were hundreds of wee baby lambs. The sheep-man gave me two of them; I could almost put one of them in my overcoat pocket they were so small. I took them home to Sadie. She was pleased enough with them. She warmed milk for them and taught them to drink and they grew very fast. She carried them, and sung to them, until they grew too big for her to lift aud then she ran races with them up and down the paths.

Tom our shepherd dog was a fine playmate. He could beat half the boys catching ball. When Sadie cried he would howl dismally until it made her laugh to hear him; that would stop her crying of course.

Tom could drive the cows home quicker than a boy could.

Then we had a pony to ride, she knew a great deal; she was very swift yet it was safe for little Sadie to ride her she was so gentle. Then we fed ever so many calves from buckets and some of them were very tame. We used to lead them about for fun. Oh! we were not lonely at all with so many lively creatures to play with.

H. H. D.



Sermon.

And they heard a great voice from heaven saying unto them come up hither.—*Rev.* xi. 12.

"We had a sermon on climbing to-day," said Lucy "and I am sure it will be helpful to me."

"Mountain climbing? do you mean Lucy."

"If you call life a mountain, I should say yes to your question. Perhaps it would have been a better word if I had said that our sermon was about aspiring."

"Oh that seems quite a different thing."

"No. I don't think it is, such a very different thing. To aspire is to desire to go up. To climb is only obeying the aspiration.

Our minister said that his sermon was suggested by seeing a gentleman start out with his little boy for a walk, and hearing him say.

'Which way shall we go Harry?' One direction led up a steep hill, the other into a swampy valley. The child replied 'Let us go *up* papa.' 'But we must climb if we go up," said the father.

'Yes I know it,' said Harry. 'But it is much nicer when we get there.'

"This child's decision," said our minister "set me thinking. How constantly that question comes to each of us in this life. Not about real mountains, but about the mountains of hinderance that are on our faith, and we have to answer to ourselves, whether we shall persevere and climb over them, or shall let them master us and crowd us into the swampy valley."

"It's harder to go up hill, than it is to go down always, said Mary "I suppose that is the reason that so many fail of going up, and let themselves slip along the easiest way."

"Yes undoubtedly that is so. But do you not think they might ask themselvss the question whether they will be happier in the end if they yield to this lazy inclination to slip down the easiest way.

Take for instance two boys who are beginning life under like circumstances. They both have the opportunity to go to school, be educated, and thus having their faculties developed, become fitted to fill places of usefulness. One of these boys is aspiring. He desires to have all the powers of his being awake and active, that he may do the most good possible, while he remains upon the earth.

The other boy is indifferent, and careless, and neglects these opportunities. He thinks it is hard work to study, and he doesn't see why he should make himself uncomfortable by trying to get an education.

The days go by, and the boy who studies and aspires is climbing steadily upward on the ladder of success. He has his faculties opened and trained. He sees what a beautiful world he is in, and knows how much there is to enjoy in the animal and vegetable and mineral kingdoms about him. He has an eye of recognition for all the wonderful things that it rests upon, and is a thoroughly happy and successful boy. When he has grown to manhood, he is ready for any position of usefulness, and whatever position is offered him he is sure to fill it successfully.

The other boy grows up dull and uninteresting. He knows little except to gratify the wants of his bodily life. He has formed no habits of industry and has no background of character to push him over hard places. Unless whatever he is called on to do, is perfectly easy, he will go without the results of success rather than exert himself to attain them.

As there is no such thing as standing still on the path between the cradle and the grave, this boy not being willing to climb the hill, is steadily going down it. He hears the voices which are saying to him come up higher, but he is indifferent to them, and he rapidly descends into the pits of temptation and self-indulgence. He loses the sight of all that the other boy gets upon the heights. He loses the opportunities of usefulness which come only to those fitted to undertake them, and at last he dies, a man unregretted, who has neither been, nor done what he came to the world to be and do.

Our Sunday Schools.

MAINE.

At Dexter the Sunday sshool is iu a flourishing condition under the administration of Mrs. Merill its superintendent. At the recent anniversary exercises fifteen Bibles were presented by the pastor to as many scholars who had not been absent from church or Sunday school during the year except for sickness or some other reason.

From the annual report of the Bangor school we learn that the school numbers 399 with an average attendance of 240. There are 26 classes in the school and 2000 volumes in the library.

VERMONT.

The anniversary of the Rutland school was recently held. It has made a net gain of sixty-seven during the year and now has one hundred and five members all but three of whom are regular attendants at the morning service of the church.

MASSACHUSETTS.

Milford sends to the *Christian Leader* an excellent report of its Sunday school. The whole number of scholars is 213. In the pastyear the average attendance has been 159. Last Sunday there were 203 of the 213 present.

There has been a gain within the year of 56 scholars.

The superintendent Rev. S. A. Gardiner is justly proud of his school and the progress it is making.

ILLINOIS.

After two years of inactivity the Sunday school at McHenry under the ministry of Rev. B. Brunning has been reorganized. Forty responded to the call and all feel courage that the new movement is to be a success.

HARVEST PAGE.

Hidden Seed

238. — ENIGMA.

I am composed of 26 letters.
My 1, 13, 2, 3, 4, 18, 5 is to rub.
My 8, 7, 6 is a small mark.
My 13, 12, 11, 10 is to exist.
My 1, 14, 15, 16, 18 is to purify.
My 17, 9, 19 is to decay.
My 21, 20, 25, 26 is a girl's toy.
My 23, 22, 24 is sorrow.
My whole is in the Bible. *Maude.*

239. — ANAGRAM.

Nehw ym retahf dan rehotm ekasrfa em eth Ldro llwi tkae em pu. *Marjorie Wellington.*

240. — ENIGMA.

I am composed of 25 letters.
My 16, 17, 14 is a domestic animal.
My 2, 12, 4 is a girl's name.
My 14, 11, 2, 10, 25 is a color
My 13, 1, 10, 9 is what we see with.
My 15, 11, 21, 18, 14, 13 is a kind of fruit.
My 8, 7, 6 is two thousand pounds.
My 14, 11, 17, 9, 9 is what cattle eat.
My 19, 24, 7, 11 is part of a house.
My 3, 7, 20, 23, 15, 5 is a public park.
My 4, 11, 22 is a part of the body.
My whole is in the New Testament.

Harrg Smith.

WINTER EVENING AMUSEMENTS.

THE COMIC CONCERT.

In this performance the company for the time imagine themselves to be a band of musicians. The leader of the band is supposed to furnish each of the performers with a different musical instrument. Consequently, a violin, a harp, a flute, an accordion, a piano, a jew's-harp, and anything else that would add to the noise, are all to be performed upon at the same time. Provided with an instrument of some description himself, the leader begins playing a tune on his imaginary violoncello, or whatever else it may be, imitating the real sound as well as he can both in action and voice. The others all do the same, the sight presented being, as may well be imagined, exceedingly ludicrous, and the noise almost deafening. In the midst of it, the leader quite unexpectedly stops playing, and makes an entire change in his attitude and tone of voice, substituting for his own instrument one belonging to some one else. As soon as he does this, the performer who has been thus unceremoniously deprived of his instrument takes that of his leader, and performs on it instead. Thus the game is continued, every one being expected to carefully watch the leader's actions, and to be prepared at any time for making a sudden change.

233. — ENIGMA.

Honor thy father and thy mother.

234. — ANAGRAM.

The Lord will not forsake me in the time of trouble.

235. — ENIGMA.

The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge.

236. — DIAMOND PUZZLE.

B
T E A
O C C U R
B E C O M E S
A R M O R
B E T
S

237. — ENIGMA.

Oh God thou art my God.

OUR HARVESTERS.

Albert N. Slayton, 4; Louise Kirby, 4; Ella Lake, 3; Nellie Tompkins, 10; Clara Churchill, 10; Ethol Brown, 3; Louis, and Mary Christie, 4; Emma Cushing, 4; Luella Fulford, 3.

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